

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ARDAY/HLK

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

NEA - MR. ATHERTON

S/S -MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS FLASH

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 063334

NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652:YGDS-2

TAGS:PFOR, PINT, LE, SY

SUBJECT: LEBANON

REF: DAMASCUS 1483

1. YOU SHOULD GO BACK TO ASAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SAYING
THAT YOU REPORTED TO ME YOUR CONVERSATION WITH HIM ON
LEBANON AND THAT I HAVE SENT YOU THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN
RESPONSE:

(A) WE ALSO HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES
AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON,
AND WE ALSO ARE ANXIOUS TO SEE THE RESTORATION OF STABILITY
IN THE COUNTRY.

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(B) THE BIGGEST DANGER WE SEE IS THAT, THROUGH MISUNDERSTANDING BY SYRIA AND ISRAEL OF EACH OTHER'S INTENTIONS, A SITUATION COULD EVOLVE WHICH WOULD ESCALATE INTO HOSTILITIES. WE ARE PREPARED TO HELP AVOID SUCH MISUNDERSTANDING SO LONG AS WE KNOW THERE IS NO SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION AND HAVE SOME IDEA OF HOW SYRIA INTENDS PROCEED IN ITS MEDIATORY ROLE IN LEBANON WHICH, AS THE PRESIDENT KNOWS, WE HAVE VIEWED IN A POSITIVE LIGHT.

(C) I WOULD BE INTERESTED TO HEAR ASAD'S VIEWS ON THE KIND OF OUTCOME HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE EMERGE IN LEBANON. WE ARE ASSUMING THAT THE DESIRED OUTCOME WOULD CREATE A SITUATION UNDER WHICH THE POLITICAL COMPROMISE UNDERSTANDING PREVIOUSLY AGREED UPON AS A RESULT OF SYRIAN MEDIATION WOULD REMAIN AS A FOUNDATION, AND THAT SOME ACCOMMODATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE TO RESTORE THE INTEGRITY OF THE LEBANESE ARMY AND ABSORB OR SOMEHOW ESTABLISH CONTROL OVER THE DISSIDENT ELEMENTS SUCH AS THOSE LED BY KHATIB.

(D) I WOULD ALSO BE INTERESTED IN WHATEVER THE PRESIDENT CAN TELL ME OF HIS PLANS FOR COPING WITH THE SITUATION IN LEBANON. WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO LEND SUPPORT TO SUCH CONSTRUCTIVE AND MODERATE POLITICAL MEANS AS MAY SEEM REASONABLE TO US.

(E) WE WILL DO OUR BEST WITH THE ISRAELIS AS THE SITUATION DEVELOPS, AND I AM RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC THAT WE CAN RESTRAIN THEIR APPREHENSIONS AND FORESTALL THEIR INTERVENTION SO LONG AS OUTSIDE MILITARY FORCES ARE NOT INTRODUCED.

2. PLEASE ALSO TELL ASAD THAT I WAS VERY PLEASED AND HEARTENED BY THE WARMTH OF THE RECEPTION GIVEN BY HIM AND OTHER SYRIAN OFFICIALS TO THE VISIT OF SECRETARY SIMON. I WANT HIM TO KNOW THAT AS WAS DISCUSSED BETWEEN HIM AND SECRETARY SIMON, WE WILL PROCEED ALONG THE LINES OF STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES IN ALL POSSIBLE WAYS.

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3. FINALLY, PLEASE CONVEY TO ASAD MY BEST PERSONAL REGARDS.

4. FYI: I WOULD LIKE YOU TO PLAN TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK SO THAT WE CAN MEET MARCH 25 AND 26. I WILL THEN WANT YOU TO RETURN TO DAMASCUS TO BE THERE DURING THE PERIOD WHEN HUSSEIN IS IN WASHINGTON (MARCH 30 AND 31) DURING WHICH TIME YOU

SHOULD REPORT TO ASAD UPON YOUR CONSULTATIONS HERE. KISSINGER

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